

MINUTES
CITY OF WOODSTOCK
OLD COURTHOUSE AND SHERIFF'S HOUSE ADVISORY COMMISSION
October 17, 2016
City Council Chambers

A Regular Meeting of the City of Woodstock Old Courthouse and Sheriff's House Advisory Commission was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Dennis Sandquist on Monday, October 17, 2016 in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

A roll call was taken.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Lynde Anderson, Jim Campion, Donovan Day, Trisha Doornbosch, Jim Prindiville, David Stumpf, Tammy Townshend Kise, Joseph White and Chairman Dennis Sandquist.

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: City Planner/Staff Liaison Nancy Baker and Economic Director Garrett Anderson.

OTHERS PRESENT: City Clerk Cindy Smiley and Friends of the Old Courthouse representatives Susan Stelford and Julie Miller.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER

Chairman Sandquist introduced and welcomed new member Donovan Day.

In response to a request from Chairman Sandquist, Commissioner Day gave a brief background of himself stating he lives in Woodstock and formerly worked for the City of Woodstock, first as Code Enforcement Officer and then as Assistant Community Development Director. He noted he was with the City when it took over the Old Courthouse and Sheriff's House and was Project Manager for the facilities along with Nancy Baker. Mr. Day stated he knows every corner of the buildings, having helped work to shore up the structures. He noted he was married in the Old Courthouse, has great affection for the buildings and hopes to continue the effort to bring new life to them to keep them open to the public.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by J. Prindiville, second by D. Stumpf, to approve the minutes of the September 19, 2016 regular meeting of the Old Courthouse and Sheriff's House Advisory Commission with the following correction:

- Page 7, Paragraph 6, change "J. Prindiville opined the co-work use" to "J. White opined the co-work use..."
- Commissioner Stumpf stated that in his comments memorialized in Paragraph 3 of Page 9, he meant to also include the filming of the movie "*Groundhog Day*" as one of the four major historic figures or events connected to Woodstock.

Ayes: J. Campion, T. Doornbosch, J. Prindiville, D. Stumpf, J. White, and Chairman Sandquist.
Nays: none. Abstentions: L. Anderson, D. Day, and T. Townsend-Kise. Absentees: None.
Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Darrell Moore, 527 South Jefferson, stated he has been attending the meetings of this Commission. He noted he realizes the Artspace Study has not been received universally well by everyone but opined that it is a valuable study, noting his agreement with much of what it proposed.

Mr. Moore stated he knows there is pressure in the community for the City to divest itself of the Old Courthouse but noted the Study recognized the value of holding on to the building long-term in some respect. Referring to the co-work space usage recommendation, Mr. Moore stated he has long thought this was a very promising use for the building due to its irregular and difficult configuration which is not conducive to accommodating regular work spaces. He also stated the type of occupant that will be attracted to a co-work space will also be drawn to the Square to eat, shop, or have coffee so that the Square will become an extension of the work space.

Mr. Moore also opined that co-work space could be configured into the 3rd floor space very quickly and, if at some time the City wishes to go in a different direction, it would be very easy to reconfigure the space for some other use.

Mr. Moore noted many people have indicated their wish that the Old Courthouse remain open to the Public but it should not be expected that every corner of a historic building can remain open in this way. He cited the example of the Marquette Building in Chicago, where he used to work, stating the beautiful lobby was open to the public while the upper floors were devoted to private work space not open to the public. He opined that this could be done with the Old Courthouse also, with the lower floors open and supporting micro-retail bringing people in to appreciate the interior of the building.

Concerning the Sheriff's House, Mr. Moore opined that a museum could be a big draw or could only draw one-time visits. He suggested playing up the Sheriff's facilities and the Debs' aspect and considering exhibits around Chicago gangsters and a theme restaurant to use all the space.

Chairman Sandquist noted both last month's and this month's public comments were very insightful and wished to encourage more public comment.

FRIENDS OF THE OLD COURTHOUSE UPDATE

Susan Stelford, Vice-President of the Friends of the Old Courthouse, introduced Julie Miller, Board Member.

Ms. Stelford stated the mission of the Friends is to raise awareness of the buildings and the restoration project and to raise funds for same.

Discussing the mission to raise awareness, Ms. Miller passed out draft copies of a self-guided tour brochure which provides history and information as well as a tour. Ms. Stelford stated the goal is to have the brochures ready and available by the Lighting of the Square. She stated many people are coming into the gallery asking questions and the brochure will be available for the gallery staff and artists to hand out to these individuals. Ms. Stelford noted more photos and information will be included in the brochure. She also informed the Commission that one of the Board members traveled to Texas to interview the grandson of Mr. Van Osdal, who provided the information and

photos which will also be included in the brochure. Ms. Stelford stated the brochure can be easily updated as the building condition changes during the restoration project.

Ms. Stelford noted there will be a display placed in the Old Courthouse and described for the Commission what will be included in the display, including a donation box.

Ms. Stelford stated these efforts will help make people aware of why this project is so important. She noted once the Sheriff's House is open to the public, a brochure will be created for that building also.

Ms. Stelford stated that eventually, once the buildings are restored to the point that it can be allowed, they would like to operate full tours of the buildings led by docents. In addition, it is the group's wish to work with the Opera House to operate packaged tours of both buildings, with the tours, including lunch, offered to bus groups.

Ms. Stelford stated the Friends group is also putting together a panel display of the Old Courthouse which will be rotated among the libraries throughout McHenry County to raise awareness throughout the County, noting that it is the County's Old Courthouse. She stated the group has applied for a grant to get the panels printed.

Ms. Stelford then outlined the various fundraising efforts undertaken by the group thus far, including a Culver's fundraiser and Dick Tracy Day. She stated the group has a mailing list of 600+. She described for the Commission the upcoming Gingerbread Walk fundraiser which will be held in the Old Courthouse during the Lighting of the Square. She invited the Commission members to submit entries.

Other upcoming fundraisers detailed by Ms. Stelford included a photo book and a Dick Tracy Mystery Dinner and silent auction scheduled for next summer at which time the world record comic strip will be unveiled.

Ms. Stelford stated the Friends have been unable to apply for grants because the issue of ownership has not been decided. She stated that donors also would like to know the planned use for the buildings before they commit to donations. She noted that knowing the use will also help them know who or what type of donor to approach. In summary, she stated the donors are not willing to commit to large donations without knowing use or ownership.

In response to a suggestion from J. Prindiville of creating an audio that can be accessed by visitors via cellphone, Ms. Stelford stated the group has discussed setting up a television in the Old Courthouse which would run a video about the building and the restoration project.

In response to a comment from Chairman Sandquist that he originally thought use should be determined first and a question as to how much it would help if ownership is decided first, Ms. Stelford opined that it would help immensely.

In response to a question from Commissioner Stumpf concerning naming rights, Ms. Stelford stated they have discussed this with one potential donor who wishes to remain anonymous noting this could include the naming of the galleries, the individual rooms, the staircase, and so on. She noted this could be decided by the City if ownership is retained.

Commissioner Stumpf suggested the group think about endowments, approach descendants of individuals involved with the history of the building, and think about possible donations connected with the movies that have been filmed there.

In response to a question from T. Doornbosch concerning the group's interest in overseeing management of the building should the City retain ownership, Ms. Stelford stated the group could possibly be interested but would need an experienced professional manager as there is no one on the Friends' board who is experienced enough to serve in that function.

D. Stumpf opined that the Friends should figure out what its on-going role would be. Ms. Stelford stated when she founded the group, she envisioned the role to be like that of the Friends of the Opera House in promoting the facility and fundraising. She stated she had not envisioned a management function and the group has not discussed this. D. Stumpf suggested the Board formalize this so when the Commission makes a recommendation to the Council that information can be included in the recommendation.

In response to a question from D. Stumpf concerning the group's goal for fundraising, Ms. Stelford stated there was not set goal for each event, noting the goal for the Windows event is to fund the windows. Commissioner White urged the group to make sure donors are aware that the bulk of the initial funds raised will go to restoration.

Commissioner Day stated fundraising is not easy and the group's efforts toward raising awareness are paying off, recognizing the members have put in a lot of hours. He opined that seeing them in some position long-term is a good idea.

D. Day further opined it would be good for the City to maintain ownership even if there is a managing partner as ownership is the key, noting N. Baker worked on a grant opportunity that did not come to fruition because the City does not own the building. S. Stelford described some of the grants available for application once the issues of ownership and usage are decided, noting application cannot even be made until that time.

S. Stelford stated the Friends' group is also trying to reach families who grew up in Woodstock and have feelings for the building. D. Day stated making memories is the key and described discussions he and N. Baker had with the late Sid Edinger who grew up in the Sheriff's House as the son of the Sheriff. He discussed the history of the buildings and the people connected to them, which appeals to the people in the County and ties them to the building.

In response to a question from T. Townsend-Kise concerning how the Commission could support the Friends, Ms. Stelford invited the members to participate in the development of the photo book and the Gingerbread Walk. She also invited them to buy tickets to the Dick Tracy Murder Mystery Dinner and to contact the group with any fundraising ideas they may have.

The Commission thanked Ms. Stelford and the Friends of the Old Courthouse for their efforts on behalf of the project.

FUTURE USE RESEARCH UPDATES

Chairman Sandquist requested updates from Commission members.

L. Anderson stated he has been researching Art/Retail uses for the buildings. He noted that both uses were included in the Artspace Study recommendations and an arts center usage received a strong response from survey respondents. He stated these uses would attract both local and out-of-town people to the Square. Commissioner Anderson stated the space lends itself to these uses and could be open all week with special dates for events.

Commissioner Anderson continued, stating there could be a dozen or more spaces suitable for small retail or artist studio use on the first and second floors. He noted this would tie into the incubator concept researched and reported on by Commissioner Doornbosch at a previous meeting.

Commissioner Anderson called the Commission's attention to the Starline Building in Harvard which combines artist space with larger spaces for weddings and events, making it a multi-functional building. He described the facility's Fourth Friday events, stating dinner is available to attendees on the first floor of the building. He stated this is similar to a use that could be developed for the Old Courthouse. He noted this is a private enterprise. Mr. Anderson opined this building model should be studied, including a review of rental rates, demand for rental spaces, and other information.

He noted his feeling that the renters should pay enough rent to support the space with a pro-rated amount for the common area. He stated it may be possible for each tenant to pay for their individual space improvements but that it is doubtful they would be able to contribute to major building improvements to make the building code compliant.

Commissioner Anderson then discussed funding sources, stating this is the main concern for this use. He stated funding by the City, possible grants, or foundation support would be required to fund major costs.

Concerning ownership/management options, Mr. Anderson stated the City most likely would retain ownership with possibly a main tenant or tenant representative providing management of the building.

Commissioner Anderson then called attention to the article included in the packet entitled, *Public Buildings Keep Town Centers Alive*, which describes the effect a public building like the Old Courthouse can have on a downtown. He noted the article states that many things concerning the other businesses depend upon the public building remaining a vital space in the downtown and that the public building plays a vital role in the downtown.

D. Stumpf noted he has been at several of the Fourth Friday events mentioned by Commissioner Anderson and stated he has heard this brought up in the context of the Old Courthouse in terms of competition. He opined the Commission or the City should send a group to talk to the owners of the Starline Building to see if they feel it would be competitive.

T. Townsend-Kise stated the Starline venture is very much different than the Old Courthouse, being privately owned by a private investor with a vision. She noted it is also a significantly larger facility which can seat 400 as a banquet facility. Ms. Townsend-Kise stated the Starline attracts people from as far away as Chicago on the train line for its four Fourth Friday events. Noting these facts, she opined the Old Courthouse would not be competitive with the Starline facility, but

rather would complement it. She also opined that if a group engages in talks with the Starline owner, then it should also talk with someone from the Dole Mansion.

Chairman Sandquist noted the Dole does a First Friday event so there is possibly room for Woodstock to participate in these art events and agreed that perhaps the City or the Commission should speak with the other entities.

T. Doornbosch stated she has toured the Starline as part of another Commission and noted the owner stated it was very difficult starting out the first couple of years and is a difficult concept to manage. Ms. Doornbosch stated she has been to a gallery opening at the facility which was a wonderful draw. She opined that this could be a complementary relationship and not competitive and that this should be stressed in talking with them. Chairman Sandquist agreed that it should be indicated that the City wishes to complement them and respect their investments and not compete.

Commissioner Stumpf provided additional information concerning the possible designation of the Sheriff's House as a national monument, noting there are various such monuments across the country. He stated he will speak with the Mayor about this but would like feedback from the Commission first as the members have now had an opportunity to review the documents provided by Nancy Baker.

Chairman Sandquist stated he was impressed with the numbers presented in the documents, stating he generally is not a fan of local museums but might be persuaded if it were a national monument.

J. Prindiville opined this is an important approach and encouraged him to proceed. He stated when you read about the case studies as provided, it is obvious that this takes tremendous political will and discussed the situation when the Post Office left the Square. He stated the idea of a national monument may seem a stretch but opined that it is important to pursue to see if it is feasible. If it is determined to be, then it will be important to gather political will and see what happens.

It was the consensus of the Commission that Commissioner Stumpf should speak with Mayor Sager concerning this idea.

Chairman Sandquist stated because of previous discussions of a role for the agricultural community in the Old Courthouse, he and Commissioner Stumpf spoke with Dan Volker of the Farm Bureau and with representatives of the Extension Office and the Soil and Water Conservation District. Those discussions revealed that the groups had previously commissioned a space study with a result that the idea was not moved forward. Mr. Sandquist stated they discussed this further and the Ag representatives expressed reservations concerning parking. He noted they also discussed the role these groups might play in the other considered uses.

Commissioner Stumpf stated it was also noted the federal government has a lot of requirements which can be barriers and take a long time to get through but that the group did not totally dismiss the idea.

J. Prindiville suggested re-opening discussion of a parking structure. Chairman Sandquist noted there is a lot of parking around the Square and asked if it is possible to dedicate parking. In response, N. Baker stated the issue could be discussed but that it probably would not be supported for a variety of reasons.

Commissioner Stumpf opined that the parking issue should be explored and discussed at the next meeting. J. Prindiville stated this could precipitate discussion of building a parking structure, noting the parking lots fill up on Friday evenings. Chairman Sandquist stated this question does seem to come up in the discussion of various uses, including educational and, consequently, this is a question the Commission and the City should be prepared to address.

Commissioner Stumpf stated the most tenable idea to come out of the discussion with the Ag groups seemed to be the location of young farmers in a co-work environment.

Chairman Sandquist then discussed his discussions with the Dean of Aurora University, Catherine Peterson. He stated they discussed the University's plans for growth noting Ms. Peterson stated she could see how someday Aurora could outgrow its present facility although there are no immediate plans for additional space. He stated he felt she found the idea of the Old Courthouse an intriguing opportunity and that she had questions about the cost of renovations. He stated she indicated she would be actively following the conversations about the Old Courthouse. He further noted that she stated she could see the facility used for short courses but did not feel the creative programs would be a good fit for Aurora.

Chairman Sandquist then informed the Commission of discussions he has had with an individual who has been using the 1871 facility in Chicago and also meeting with a small group of co-workers in Crystal Lake. He noted this individual expressed interest in holding such meetings in the Old Courthouse. In response to a request from Commissioner Stumpf, Chairman Sandquist stated he will provide this individual's contact information to him so that he may contact her.

STAFF UPDATES

N. Baker stated the window project is a little behind schedule because it has taken longer than anticipated to get the shop drawings. In response to a question from J. Campion, N. Baker stated the City received the window bids in August which had to be approved by the City Council. She then detailed what the contractor has been doing since then and described some of the work that has been done on specific windows for safety reasons. She provided more information about the process using the drawings noting they needed to be revised before the windows could be ordered. She stated the order was placed at the end of this week with the windows being delivered in about five weeks and the project completed by the end of the year.

G. Anderson stated City Staff met with the County Community Development Block Grant representatives who stated they have a plan to follow for the allocation of funds to certain areas. He noted in these discussions they also indicated they would be agreeable to allocating funds to economic development. Mr. Anderson stated City staff will work with County staff on this meaning the City could apply for CDBG funds in the future. Chairman Sandquist stated this may mean it would be a good to have the idea of ownership settled before application for these funds is made

Ms. Baker reminded the Commission that the City Council will be discussing the Artspace report at its November 1st meeting.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Discussion followed of items to be placed on the November agenda, including ownership and uses. Commissioner Stumpf stated he would be interested to find out if Artspace could give the Commission an idea of what they think about fundraising possibilities. In response to a question, N. Baker indicated that Artspace stated they are willing to answer simple questions. Chairman Sandquist suggested the Commission members forward to Ms. Baker any questions or clarifications they have for Artspace and further suggested that she not forward these to Artspace until after the November 1 Council meeting should they have questions also.

Further discussion ensued of uses and whether they should be voted on. Chairman Sandquist stated that one of the charges of the Commission is to make recommendations on uses, noting this will be the Commission's recommendation with the final decision made by the Council.

Following further discussion, it was the consensus of the Commission that Commissioner Townsend-Kise and Commissioner Doornbosch contact the Starline facility and the Dole to gauge their support for an arts usage in the Old Courthouse.

It was the consensus of the Commission that the individual members send questions they have for Artspace to Nancy Baker.

J. White wished to take a dissenting view concerning the arts usage stating the Old Courthouse is now full of art galleries. He stated if the Commission recommends an arts usage, they will just be recommending more of the same. He opined that the Commission was charged with creating a vision and the Art Center was just a place holder while the Commission came up with a vision for the next 100 years. He stated the Commission was called together to come up with a new grand vision but is back to putting art galleries in the Old Courthouse. Commissioner Stumpf stated that is why he wishes to know from Artspace what kind of money can be raised to renovate the buildings and what on-going income can be expected.

Commissioner White stated he saw the Commission agree on something and then the City Council did not take the recommendation. He opined the City Council has its own opinion and what the Commission discusses for hours does not seem to matter. Chairman Sandquist stated the City Council is elected to make those decisions, with the Commission making recommendations only. Commissioner Prindiville stated this is part of the political process, noting there will be Council members and community members who disagree and that is part of the process. Commissioner White stated he is frustrated that after all of their meetings the Commission has come up with art space uses.

J. Campion opined that it is time to seriously consider the many suggested uses they have been discussing and to eliminate some.

D. Day opined the main goal is to keep the building open to the public. He stated there is a great tenant on the ground floor and good art uses on the first floor. He opined the City should build on these with other related arts uses and that co-work space could go on the third floor, noting there are many people who work out of their homes and that this could be very beneficial to the building and the community. He noted that the co-work space could co-mingle with the artist to help them market themselves for example. He stated once these things, ownership and usage, are decided, the donors will come in. Mr. Day also stated he does not feel the arts uses will be looked at as competition by other facilities, but rather as a celebration of the arts that would be beneficial to the

region. He noted he is also excited to hear the Commission will be making a recommendation on ownership. He also stated the arts usage could build on what is already there and that the micro-retail component should be left to Economic Development Director Garrett Anderson.

Commissioner Anderson wished to update the Commission on the architectural schools, noting there were no responses from colleges and universities to his inquiries. He stated in talking with IIT, he was told the only way they would take the 3D modeling project on would be if there were an internship created and set up by a third party, i.e. an architect, an architectural firm, or the City. He stated they would not encourage students to do something like this for free and that they must be reimbursed. Mr. Anderson also noted there is also a liability component which must be covered by someone. He noted that it seems logical that this would fall under the purview of the architect who is working on the building. Commissioner Anderson also noted someone must oversee and create a vision of how this building will look inside.

Commissioner Anderson opined that it would be best for Gary Anderson to sponsor this internship and oversee this project, noting he doubts the City would want to sponsor the internship. He again noted someone must determine what the inside of the building will look like and this must be conveyed to the individual doing the model.

Commissioner Stumpf opined this is a good idea and would be much less expensive than hiring an architectural firm.

Discussion followed of how this would work and how the model could be used, with Commissioner Anderson suggesting this be discussed with Gary Anderson.

N. Baker stated she will begin conversations with Gary Anderson to explore with him whether it would be possible for him to oversee the internship or have the basic model created and how much it would cost.

J. Prindiville stated another question would be is the City interested in setting up the internship and begin a relationship with a University to which Ms. Baker responded there is no one in the City with the expertise this would require. She also noted if Gary Anderson has not done this before, he may not be the one to do this and a larger firm may be required.

J. White opined that the existing architect would be offended by another architect being brought in and the architect doing the modeling would want to do the entire project.

It was the consensus that N. Baker will contact and discuss this with Gary Anderson.

It was the consensus of the Commission that the following items be placed on the November agenda:

- Recommendation that the City retain ownership of the Old Courthouse.
- Recommendation that a portion of the Old Courthouse be used for arts uses.

ADJOURN

Motion by J. Prindiville, second by J. Campion, to adjourn this regular meeting of the Old Courthouse and Sheriff's House Advisory Commission to the next regular meeting on Monday,

November 21, 2016 at 7:00PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Ayes: L. Anderson, J. Campion, D. Day, T. Doornbosch, J. Prindiville, D. Stumpf, T. Townsend-Kise, J. White, and Chairman D. Sandquist. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: none. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:10PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Smiley
City Clerk